

CLAIMS IN "CLEAN" FORM

- 1 1. A release control method for providing early deployment releases of a software
2 system, the early deployment releases containing support for new features and
3 platforms, the method comprising the steps of:
 - 4 a. providing an early development branch of the software system that is
5 designated for incorporation of one or more software modules providing
6 support for new features and platforms;
 - 7 b. receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-tested
8 software modules, wherein each of the pre-tested software modules
9 comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new
10 platforms;
 - 11 c. committing the pre-tested software modules for new features and
12 platforms into the early development branch; and
 - 13 d. using the early development branch, generating a new early development
14 release containing pre-tested software modules for new features and
15 platforms.
- 1 2. The release control method of claim 1 comprising the additional step of repeating
2 steps c and d on a regular recurring basis for a fixed number of cycles.
- 1 3. The release control method of claim 1 wherein the pre-tested software module is
2 received at a pre-integration branch that is separate from the early development
3 branch, and wherein the committing step comprises committing pre-tested
4 software modules for new features and platforms from a pre-integration branch
5 into the early development branch.
- 1 8. A system for providing early deployment releases of a software system, the early
2 deployment releases containing support for new features and platforms,
3 comprising:

- 4 a. an early development branch of the software system designated for
- 5 incorporation of one or more software modules providing support for new
- 6 features and platforms;
- 7 b. logic for receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-
- 8 tested software modules, wherein each of the pre-tested software modules
- 9 comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new
- 10 platforms;
- 11 c. logic for committing the pre-tested software modules for new features and
- 12 platforms into the early development branch;
- 13 d. using the early development branch, logic for generating a new early
- 14 development release containing pre-tested software modules for new
- 15 features or platforms on a regular recurring basis for a fixed number of
- 16 cycles; and
- 17 e. logic for generating said new early development release containing pre-
- 18 tested software modules for new features or platforms on a regular
- 19 recurring basis for a fixed number of cycles.

1 9. (Amended) The system of claim 8 wherein the logic for committing comprises
2 logic for committing pre-tested software modules for new features and platforms
3 from a pre-integration branch into the early development branch.

- 1 14. (Amended) A product release method for controlling the release of software
2 system code based on a fixed frequency, the method comprising the steps of:
- 3 a. selecting one or more features for inclusion in a new release of the
 - 4 software system code base, wherein a quantity of features selected will allow a
 - 5 next scheduled release of the software system code base to be completed at a
 - 6 required time;
 - 7 b. testing the quantity of features selected in a plurality of business units;
 - 8 c. providing the quantity of features selected to a pre-integration branch of
 - 9 the software system code base only when testing in the business units is
 - 10 successful;

- 11 d. testing the quantity of features selected in the pre-integration branch;
- 12 e. providing the quantity of features selected to a development branch only
- 13 when testing in the business units is successful and in time to allow the next
- 14 scheduled release of the software system code base to be completed in the
- 15 required time.

- 1 15. (Unamended) The method of claim 14 comprising the additional steps of:
 - 2 a. completing testing of a modified software system code base in the
 - 3 development branch which contains the quantity of features selected and
 - 4 tested in the pre-integration branch; and
 - 5 b. releasing the modified software system code base at the required time.
-
- 1 19. A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
 - 2 receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new
 - 3 features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-
 - 4 integration branches;
 - 5 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
 - 6 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
 - 7 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
 - 8 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
 - 9 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
 - 10 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
 - 11 the central pre-integration branches.

- 1 20. A method as recited in Claim 19, further comprising the step of generating, using
- 2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-
- 3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of
- 4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-
- 5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1 21. A method as recited in Claim 1, further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or
3 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration
4 branches;
5 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of
6 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature
7 individually, and in combination with all other features;
8 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
9 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
10 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
11 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
12 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
13 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
14 the central pre-integration branches.

1 22. A method as recited in Claim 19, further comprising the step of generating, using
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-
3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1 23. A computer-readable medium comprising one or more stored sequences of
2 instructions for providing release control using early deployment releases of a
3 software system, the early deployment releases containing support for new
4 features and platforms, which instructions, when executed by one or more
5 processors, cause the one or more processors to perform the steps of:
6 a. providing an early development branch of a software release that is
7 designated for incorporation of support for new features and platforms;
8 b. receiving, from a plurality of integration units, a plurality of pre-tested
9 source code modules, wherein each of the pre-tested source code modules

- 10 comprises one or more new features or supports one or more new
11 platforms;
12 c. committing the pre-tested source code for new features and platforms into
13 the early development branch; and
14 d. using the early development branch, generating a new early development
15 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms.

- 1 24. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 23, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new
4 features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-
5 integration branches;
6 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
7 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
8 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
9 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
10 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
11 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
12 the central pre-integration branches.

- 1 25. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step
2 of generating, using the early development branch, a new early development
3 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms only
4 when the plurality of software source code modules has been committed from the
5 central pre-integration branch to the early development branch.

- 1 26. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 23, further comprising the steps
2 of:
3 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or
4 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration
5 branches;

6 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of
7 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature
8 individually, and in combination with all other features;
9 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
10 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
11 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
12 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
13 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
14 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
15 the central pre-integration branches.

1 27. A computer-readable medium as recited in Claim 24, further comprising the step
2 of generating, using the early development branch, a new early development
3 release containing pre-tested source code for new features and platforms only
4 when the plurality of software source code modules has been committed from the
5 central pre-integration branch to the early development branch.

1 28. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving and testing a plurality of software source code modules that support new
3 features or platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-
4 integration branches;
5 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
6 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
7 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
8 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
9 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
10 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
11 the central pre-integration branches.

1 29. A system as recited in Claim 28, further comprising the step of generating, using
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-

3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1 30. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the steps of:
2 receiving a plurality of software source code modules that support new features or
3 platforms at a respective plurality of business unit pre-integration
4 branches;
5 at each business unit, testing each feature of the software source code modules of
6 that business unit individually, in combination with each other feature
7 individually, and in combination with all other features;
8 committing one or more of the plurality of software source code modules from the
9 one or more of the business unit pre-integration branches to a central pre-
10 integration branch only when such testing is successful; and
11 committing the plurality of software source code modules from the central pre-
12 integration branch to the early development branch when all the modules
13 have been committed from the business unit pre-integration branches to
14 the central pre-integration branches.

1 31. A system as recited in Claim 8, further comprising the step of generating, using
2 the early development branch, a new early development release containing pre-
3 tested source code for new features and platforms only when the plurality of
4 software source code modules has been committed from the central pre-
5 integration branch to the early development branch.

1